Discovery of gigantic plant fossils

3628. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minsiter of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the latest discoveries by geologists relating to gigantic plant fossils belonging to Jurrassic Era a throwback to nearly 200 million years ago;

(b) if so, whether the Researchers from MS University, who stumbled on to the Fossilized tree logs at Khadi island in Kutch, are also launching a detailed study about the dug samples near the Harappan civilization site; and

(c) whether Government have necessary infrastructure to preserve and maintain such delicate historical finds so that posterity could also take pride in our enriched heritage?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Tourism is not aware of any such detailed study.

(c) According to the Geological Survey of India they are mandated to preserve and maintain such finds and that they have the capabilities to do so.

Development of major tourist places

†3629. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal regarding development of such major tourist places in the country with a view to bring these at par with international level is pending with Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal of including Darjeeling in West Bengal in the same; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

(d) Does not arise.

Attraction of foreign tourists

3630. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether with incredible India continuing to lag far behind not only with neighbouring China but also many of the smaller countries in the South East Asian region in attracting foreign tourists, her Ministry has demanded more budget provisions for providing incentives that will give it a much needed boost;

(b) if so, to what extent her Ministry has got concessions from the budget; and

(c) what steps are being taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Annual Plan Outlay for the Ministry of Tourism has been raised to Rs. 953.00 crores for the year 2007-08 as against a budget allocation of Rs. 830.00 crores in 2006-07. The annual Plan Outlay is utilized as per approved schemes implemented through the State Governments and Private Sector entities.

Budget hotels and accommodation to promote tourism

3631. SHRI MAHMOOD A. MADANI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of the tariff charged by the luxury hotels in the premier tourist destination of the country;

(b) whether Government propose to appreciate that such tariff is not affordable for common people; and